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**REMARKS:**

Applicants believe this response to be fully responsive to the Final Office Action mailed February 24, 2003. This Response is being submitted with a Request for Continued Examination, as requested by the Examiner during the personal interview conducted on April 3, 2003.

Claims 1-25 and 32 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. The amendments are fully supported in the specification and drawings as originally filed. No new matter has been added.

**PERSONAL INTERVIEW CONDUCTED ON APRIL 3, 2003**

The undersigned would like to express his gratitude for the courtesies extended him during the personal interview conducted on April 3, 2003 between the undersigned and Examiners Shapiro and Walsh. During the interview, proposed claim amendments were discussed in view of Barry, U.S. Patent Nos. 4,065,006; 3,677,194; and 3,528,569, Weir, U.S. Patent No. 3,613,910, and Huang et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,505,291. It was agreed that Applicants would submit the proposed amendments in a Response to the Final Office Action, along with a Request for Continued Examination. Applicants thus submit this Response with a Request for Continued Examination, so that the Examiner can consider the new claim amendments that were proposed and discussed during the interview.

**CLAIM REJECTIONS**

Claims 1-8, 12-16 and 18-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Barry, U.S. Patent No. 4,065,006. Claims 1-6, 8-21 and 23-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Weir, U.S. Patent no. 3,613,910. Claim 32 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Barry or Weir, in view of Huang et al.

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. A postal dispatch system which dispatches randomly arranged containers of sorted mail to particular dispatch carts, comprising:

a sortation conveyor having a main conveying line defined by a conveying surface ~~and conveying that conveys~~ randomly arranged containers of sorted mail, said conveying surface comprising at least one of conveyor rollers and a conveying belt;

a plurality of spurs extending generally horizontally from at least one side of said main line ~~in the direction of particular dispatch carts, said main line including a plurality of a diverter mechanism mechanisms, each of said diverter mechanisms being positioned at each an associated one~~ of said spurs, said diverter mechanisms being positioned along said conveying surface and being operable to selectively divert containers generally horizontally from said conveying surface onto the associated one of said spurs; and

at least one transport mechanism which transports containers from each of said spurs to a particular dispatch cart juxtaposed with that spur, said at least one transport mechanism that removes containers from each of said spurs, moves the removed containers generally vertically to a position adjacent to an opening in the particular dispatch cart, and inserts the removed containers into the opening in the particular dispatch cart.

As discussed during the interview, Applicants respectfully submit that Barry discloses a container side-transfer system for a railroad, and is thus improperly applied to the postal dispatch system of the present invention, which is operable to dispatch randomly arranged containers of sorted mail to particular dispatch carts. There is no teaching or suggestion of applying the principles disclosed in Barry to a postal dispatch system, nor is there any motivation to do so. Therefore, Barry, either alone or in combination with any other reference of record, does not disclose, teach or suggest the postal dispatch system of the present invention, particularly as set forth in claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

As also discussed during the interview, Weir does not disclose, teach or suggest the postal dispatch system of the present invention. Weir discloses a warehouse system with infeed and distributing conveyors serving stacker cranes in a common aisle. The warehouse system includes a conveyor (178) mounted on top of storage racks of the system. A crane (120) may pick up shipments moving along the conveyor and may lower the shipments on a platform (128) down to the storage racks (175) or transfer stations (100) at conveyor booms (23) positioned below the conveyor (178).

The Office Action states that Weir anticipates claim 1 of the present application because Weir discloses a plurality of spurs 23 and a diverter mechanism 128 at each of the spurs, and at least one transport mechanism 23. As discussed during the interview, the loading-unloading arms 23 of Weir cannot be applied to both the "plurality of spurs" term *and* the "transport mechanism" term of claim 1 of the present application. Such an application of the prior art does not give full consideration of each term of claim 1. Likewise, if the racks 175 are considered to be analogous to the "spurs" of claim 1, as suggested in the Office Action, then the platform 128 cannot be considered to be analogous to both the "diverter mechanism" term *and* the "transport mechanism" term of claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that Weir does not disclose a plurality of spurs extending generally horizontally from at least one side of the main line of the conveyor, and does not disclose a plurality of diverter mechanisms, with each of the diverter mechanisms being positioned at an associated one of the spurs and being operable to selectively divert containers generally horizontally from the conveying surface onto the associated spur. Nor does Weir disclose a transport mechanism which removes containers from the spurs and moves the removed containers generally vertically to a position adjacent to an opening in the particular dispatch cart. Therefore, Weir, either alone or in combination with any other prior art reference of record, does not disclose, teach or suggest the postal dispatch system of the present invention, particularly as set forth in claim 1 and in the claims depending therefrom.

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Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Weir and/or Barry, either alone or in combination with any other prior art of record, do not disclose, teach or suggest the postal dispatch system of the present invention, particularly as set forth in claim 1 and in the claims depending therefrom.

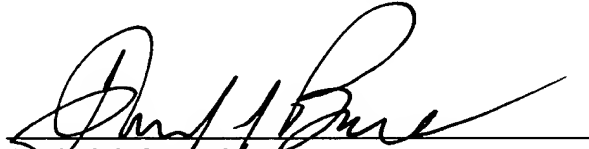
Claims 1-25 and 32 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-25 and 32 are now in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly and respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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